

**FRIGORIFICO MATADERO CARRASCO S.A.**

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**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

1. **FRIGORIFICO MATADERO CARRASCO S.A.** (Establishment N° 3) is approved by US Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to produce for export bovine and lamb meat.
2. The **FRIGORIFICO MATADERO CARRASCO**'s facilities are under continuous inspection by MGAP (Ministerio de Ganadería, Agricultura y Pesca), D.I.A. (Dirección de Industria Animal) personnel and we operate under "equivalent" inspection and certified by USDA-FSIS to export into the U.S.
3. **FRIGORIFICO MATADERO CARRASCO S.A.** is working under an HACCP System which follows the "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems, Final Rule. (Federal Register, 9 CFR Part 304, et al, 25 July 1996, FSIS). The Pathogen Reduction (PR) component mandated a program of bacteriological testing of bovine carcasses for the presence of Generic Escherichia Coli and Salmonella spp bacteria, to verify the effectiveness of the SSOP and the HACCP plan in the plant.

The Company implemented a testing program for Generic Escherichia Coli in carcasses, following the Pathogen Reduction (PR) criteria from the Final Rule, one sample every 300 cattle slaughtered is randomly taken. The Company Laboratory is audited by the MGAP Authorities (Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries - MGAP). This program has been working since 1997.

4. The Salmonella spp in carcasses testing program was implemented by an MGAP official program, so the official Veterinarian Supervisor takes randomly the samples and sends them to the official Laboratory (DILAVE). This testing program was agreed between the MGAP authorities and the FSIS authorities.
5. The company has in place a fully documented HACCP System and Pre-Requirement Program:
  - HACCP plan has been working since January 1998.
  - The HACCP plan is audited by on-plant MGAP's Supervisors and is audited at least once a month by the MGAP's Regional Supervisor.
  - After a new reassessment the plant has been subjected to a detailed verification audit by the MGAP's Regional Supervisor, who follows the FSIS requirements.

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- The company has been audited following the HACCP criteria by the FSIS officers in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004 and accepted as satisfactory.
- The HACCP plan has been audited by customers' auditors.

6. The company also

- Complies with the Standard Operating Procedure for Sanitation (Federal Register Vol. 61, nº 144) since 1997.

In order to achieve that, there are implemented written SSOPs & training programs sufficient to insure that all meat processing and handling equipment that contacts meat is cleaned and sanitized properly and sanitation effectiveness is monitored at pre-operational inspection. Operational SSOPs is capable of preventing contamination of raw materials and in-process products. There is documentation associated with SSOPs.

- Complies with Good Manufacturing Practices, through Pre-Requirement Programs.
- Complies with Prohibition of Specified Risk Material for Human Food and Requirements for the Disposition of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Cattle; Meat /Bone Separation Machinery and Meat Recovery (AMR) System; Prohibition of the Use of Certain Stunning Devices To Immobilize Cattle During Slaughter; Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy Surveillance Program; Interim Final Rules and Notice. (Federal Register, 9 CFR Part 301,309 et al, January 12,2004. Docket 03-025IF).

The Company has implemented written programs for:

- Excluding non-ambulatory disabled ("downer") cattle
- Prohibiting feeding of ruminant-derived proteins to ruminants, ( It is an Uruguayan law since April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1996)
- Prohibiting of use of antibiotics and other animal drugs. Is being supervised by the MGAP since 1978, through the National Biological Residues Program in Animal Origin Food.
- Requiring that all cattle be handled in a manner compliant with standards set forth in the American Meat Institute's "Good Management Practices for Animal Handling and Stunning for Cattle" and "Recommended Animal Handling Guidelines for Meat Packers"
- The Company uses an electrical device for stunning.
- The Company has written procedures addressing the removal, segregation and disposal of Specified Risk Materials ("SRM").

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- Uruguay was certified by the OIE ( World Organisation for Animal Health) as free of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in May 27th,2004.

7. The Company maintains a **Quality Assurance** function that is adequately organized, staffed and equipped to ensure compliance with client specifications.
8. The raw material is obtained from cattle slaughtered, deboned, packed and frozen or chilled in our plant without further process.
9. Boning is done in such a manner as to exclude the following materials from the boneless beef: bones, bone chips, cartilage, bruises, blood clots, major lymph glands, tendons, liver, kidneys, major arteries, neck meat impregnated with blood, abdominal peritoneum, and tunic.
10. Active and positive action to ensure that "deadlocks", metal staples, and other fastening devices are not present in beef. We do not use metal staples or fasteners of any kind for packaging.
11. Boneless beef does not contain Advanced Meat Recovery (AMR) meat.
12. Packing: the Plant uses polyethylene lay and external carton boxes to assure isolation of meat from external contamination.
13. Labelling: the following items are identified: plant name, establishment N°, plant address, country of origin, net weight, product description (boneless beef), product code agreed with client, production date, "keep frozen" or "keep refrigerated", shipping mark.
14. In relation to E.Coli 0157:H7, Frigorífico Matadero Carrasco S.A., Establishment N° 3, confirms that HACCP Plan has been reassessed in accordance with "Federal Register Notice 9 CFR Part 417 (Docket n° 00-022N; October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002), E.Coli 0157:H7 Contamination of Beef Products".
15. The reassessed HACCP Plan includes the following interventions and the preventive measures, to eliminate or reduce the likely occurrence of E.Coli 0157:H7 to a detectable level.
  - Washing of cattle before slaughter.
  - stunning box and handling area is washed between animals
  - sterilization of tools and knives between each cattle with hot water with 82°C as a minimum.
  - Occlusion of the aesophagus
  - The bung is sealed with a plastic bag and tied with a tight cord to avoid spillage
  - The permanent sterilization of the evisceration table with hot water at 82°C as a minimum
  - Trimming out of any visual contamination over the carcass
  - The HACCP Plan (critical control point at the end of the slaughter line where a Meat Hygiene Assessment is made by a visual inspection over a 100 % of the carcasses with zero tolerance criteria for fecal ingest and milk (ref. FSIS Directive 6420.1) and attendant corrective actions and preventive measures as required. Carcasses are immediately chilled, the

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HACCP plan has a critical control point at this step, monitoring time/temperature of boned meat, and attendant corrective actions and preventive measures as required.

- To verify the effectiveness of the HACCP Plan, there are specific verification processes.
16. The plant has other microbiological control programs than the generic E.coli and Salmonella spp in carcasses. To verify the effectiveness of the HACCP Plan, these programs are microbiological control over carcasses and cuts, equipment and contact surfaces.
  17. The efficacy of the HACCP Plan is also verified by microbiological testing of E.coli 0157:H7, carried out by Frigorífico Matadero Carrasco's own laboratory.

During 2002,2003,2004 ( until the end of may 2004), 2145 boxes from manufacturing meat and trimmings have been tested for E.Coli 0157:H7, and none has returned a "positive" detection of E.Coli 0157:H7. If a "positive" detection was made, procedures are in place to prevent and avoid shipment of product.

Only product that is compliant with HACCP requirement and tested "negative" for E.Coli 0157:H7 is shipped.

The Plant follows the E.coli 0157:H7 Sampling and Testing program issued by INAC's "Program for E.Coli 0157:H7 Determination" (January,1999), which covers five samples for each date of production, using Reveal Tests.

Our laboratory is on a check-sample program for E.Coli 0157:H7 with a third laboratory supervised by LATU (Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay), since January 2004.

If you require further information please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Beatriz Briano Cal, Eng. MBA  
Quality Assurance Department  
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